

SCAG 2004 RTP PEIR Proposal Pre-bid Meeting Questions and Answers

1. What is the status of the Growth Visioning process and will the Growth Visioning schedule affect the 2004 PEIR schedule?

The Growth Visioning process is underway and their consultant has recently come on board. The Growth Visioning process will continue beyond the 2004 RTP development schedule, and it is our understanding that Growth Visioning staff will draw from the preliminary goals and objectives of the Growth Visioning process to develop a comprehensive RTP PEIR alternative that focuses on land use. We anticipate that the Growth Visioning land-use alternative will be completed on schedule, but there is no guarantee that input from Growth Visioning—or input from any other component of the RTP—will be provided to the EIR team in a timely manner. In general, the EIR consultant will need to be flexible and creative in order to overcome the challenging schedule.

2. What are the major differences between the 2001 RTP PEIR and the 2004 RTP PEIR?

More evaluation of growth will be a substantial difference between the 2001 and 2004 RTP PEIR. First, the alternatives analysis will include a distinct Growth Visioning Alternative that will focus on the nexus between transportation and land use. Second, the alternatives analysis and the impact assessment will need to evaluate and compare the different growth patterns that are estimated to be associated with each Alternative. The 2001 RTP PEIR estimated growth that was expected to be associated with different aviation scenarios. The 2004 RTP PEIR will consider the growth associated with each complete RTP PEIR Alternative, which will include ground transportation projects as well as aviation. We anticipate that SCAG staff will help estimate the growth patterns associated with each alternative transportation plan, and we anticipate that the EIR consultant will evaluate and compare the environmental effects of each of the development patterns.

3. Are the multiple growth and aviation scenarios just for the Growth Visioning Alternative?

No. We anticipate one aviation scenario and one growth scenario for each Alternative to the Proposed 2004 RTP, and anticipate multiple growth and aviation scenarios may be required for the Proposed 2004 RTP. However, the alternatives and scenarios may change since the RTP development is a dynamic process that is affected by over 10 committees and task forces. The EIR consultant must be flexible enough to adjust to the dynamic nature of the RTP process. For instance, there is a possibility that each alternative will need to be evaluated with two growth scenarios. Thus, consultants will need to make explicit assumptions for their cost estimates that both adequately fulfill requirements of CEQA and fulfill demands of SCAG staff and policymakers.

4. Are there any parts of the 2001 RTP PEIR that you were not happy with?

No, we were happy considering the time and resources that we had. In particular the environmental setting was good, and the environmental setting may require only minimal resources to update for the 2004 PEIR.

It is important to note that the 2001 RTP PEIR was legally challenged, and the 2004 PEIR may be challenged. Therefore, the 2004 RTP PEIR must be a thorough, legally defensible document that fully complies with all of the requirements CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines.

5. Is the 2004 Proposed Regional Transportation Plan more defined than the other EIR alternatives?

The Proposed Plan is still being developed, although we anticipate that it will be similar to the 2001 Plan. Areas that are expected differ from the 2001 Plan include the growth forecasts and the potential removal of El Toro as a commercial airport from the aviation scenario.

6. Is the RTP development concurrent with EIR or does the RTP development start before the EIR?

The RTP development starts before the EIR, although there will be some overlap.

7. What are the requirements for interim years?

Interim years may be required for the Proposed 2004 RTP but will not be required for the alternatives to the Proposed Plan. If the EIR consultant can provide a reasonable argument that CEQA does not require evaluation of the potential environmental effects at the interim years, then SCAG may consider not requiring environmental evaluation of the interim years.

8. Will projects and programs at each interim year be developed by SCAG staff?

Yes, the RTP process will include evaluation of the Proposed 2004 RTP at five-year increments. Therefore, the environmental effects of each interim year may be required by SCAG for the final Proposed Plan.

9. Will noise contours associated with airports be required?

New noise contours analysis will not be required. However, we anticipate that off model analysis of the noise contour analysis for the 2001 RTP PEIR will be updated with help from the consultant, but the updating will require minimal effort.

10. Will the transportation modeling be done by SCAG staff?

Yes, but the schedule conflicts may be challenging. Timing of the transportation modeling data is another area where the EIR consultant will need be flexible because the modeling work is under a very demanding schedule.

11. What are the specific CEQA issues that are being legally challenged in the 2001 RTP PEIR?

We are not at liberty to discuss on-going litigation.

12. Is the scope of the 2004 RTP PEIR larger than the 2004?

No. Although it is larger in some areas, it is considerably smaller in others. For instance, the noise contour work, the environmental setting, and perhaps the Response to Comments are expected to require less effort for the 2004 EIR than for the 2001. However, the greater analysis of growth required for the 2004 EIR will require considerably more effort than 2001.

13. Are the EIR consultants involved in the process of developing the RTP and the RTP PEIR?

Yes. The EIR consultants will need to spend considerable time working directly with SCAG staff and attending policy committees and task forces. Due to the dynamic nature of our planning process, the consultant will need to function as a true team member of SCAG staff. In addition, the EIR consultant will need to attend SCAG policy meetings, such as Growth Visioning, Aviation, Transportation, and RTP. Overall, the RTP/RTP PEIR development is a challenging but rewarding process.

14. What are the public involvement requirements for the EIR consultant?

The RTP outreach will be handled by SCAG staff and an outreach specialist. However, the consultant will be required to attend some of the meetings. Attendance of these meetings should not be a major cost.

15. How many public hearings?

It has not been determined yet.

16. Should the consultant assume a fixed fee with explicit assumptions?

Yes.

17. Is there a budget range?

No.

We can tell you that the cost of the 2001 RTP PEIR was \$1.8 million. However, the total aviation noise contour work accounted for \$700,000 and the environmental setting accounted for \$300,000. Since we are assuming that the minimal work will be required to update the environmental setting and the noise contours, the total cost for the 2004 RTP PEIR should be considerably lower than for 2001.